



Inside

BRUNO SAMMARTINO:
"HAVE THE FANS FORGOTTEN ME ?"

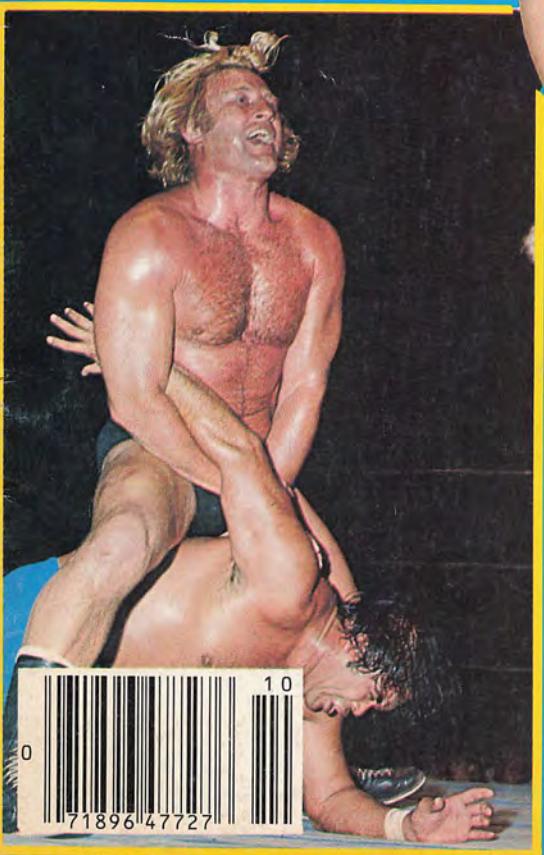
October 1978
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Wrestling

THE SECRET
BEHIND DUSTY RHODES'
BIONIC ELBOW



HOW YOU CAN END
THE CHAMPIONSHIP REIGN
OF NICK BOCWINKLE !



Andre the Giant & Bob Backlund:
HOW THIS HANDSHAKE
MAY DESTROY
WRESTLING!!!



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INSIDE

Wrestling

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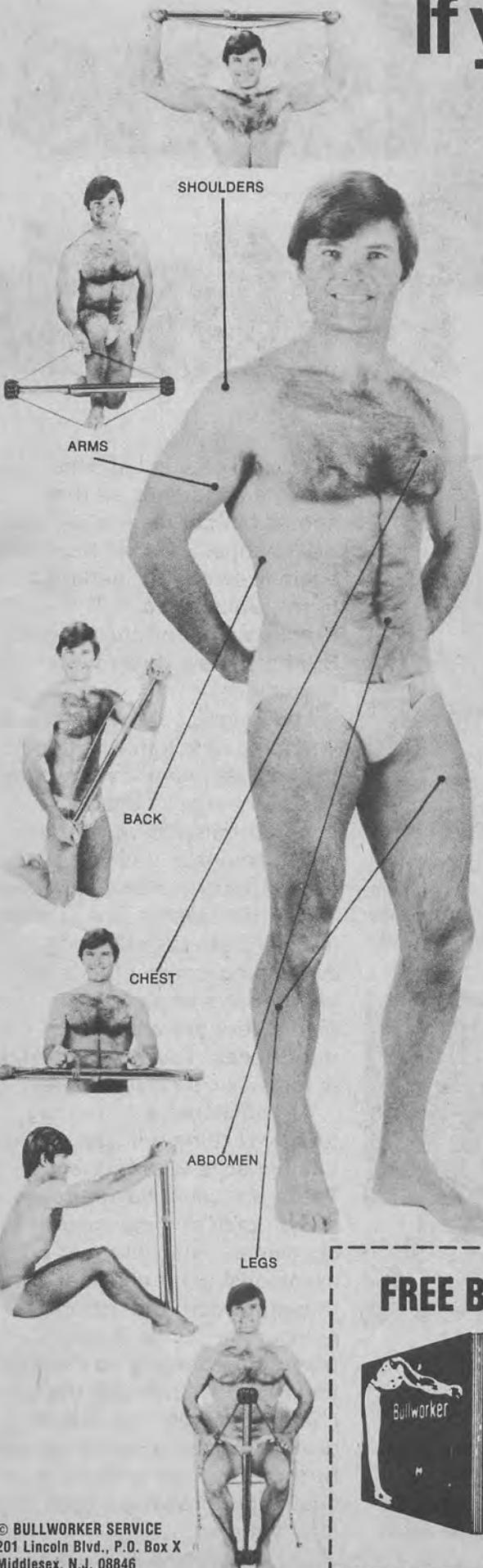
Peter
King

Editor-in-Chief

15 MORE RANDOM THOUGHTS

- 1--The one match I would like to see more than any other is Bobby Backlund vs. Dusty Rhodes.
- 2--Although Dino Bravo was heartbroken the night he lost the WWWF tag team belt, in the long run it will be the best thing for him.
- 3--Am I going crazy, or has Superstar Graham begun to mellow?
- 4--If you asked me to name the finest scientific wrestler in the world today, I'd say Billy Robinson.
- 5--Confidential to Dick Slater: You'd better make up your mind, Dickie. What's it going to be, good guy or bad guy?
- 6--In his short time as a pro, Ric Flair has made more enemies than Adolf Hitler.
- 7--Am I going crazy, or is Andre the Giant getting bigger?
- 8--There is probably no more talented wrestler, physically, than Ivan Koloff.
- 9--Even though I'm glad the WWWF is finally rid of Ken Patera, I can't help but admit I miss the excitement he generates.
- 10--Ricky Steamboat has gone from rookie to top contender faster than any wrestler has in the last 15 years.
- 11--Am I going crazy, or does Jack Brisco have his eyes on the WWWF belt?
- 12--Confidential to Greg Valentine: You say you trust Ric Flair with your life. Fine. But brother, don't turn your back on him.
- 13--Did you know that Freddie Blassie offered Stan Hansen \$100,000 to return to the WWWF? And was turned down!
- 14--Mr. Wrestling II continues to stand for all that is decent and pure in this most ruthless of sports.
- 15--Don't count out Dory Funk Jr. in the NWA title sweepstakes.

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Body Slams & Pinfalls

By Dan Shocket

HAPPY DAYS ARE here again. Those fumbling bores, Dominic DeNucci and Dino Bravo, are no longer disgracing the WWWF tag team title. The new champions are brilliant, tough, men of power and brains. Welcome The Lumberjacks!

It had to happen sooner or later. With clowns like DeNucci and Bravo wearing the belts, real wrestlers had to be attracted to the easy pickings. It was like a sign saying, "WWWF tag team championship for the asking." The Lumberjacks asked—and took!

We're now in The Lumberjack era. These two superb grapplers are what every tag team should be—rough, tough, and asking no favors. They go looking for trouble, knowing it takes a man to make a conquest. Every time they walk into an arena, it's an exhibition of wrestling ferocity. That's what it's supposed to be all about.

Unfortunately, there's too much of the Bravo-DeNucci syndrome in tag team wrestling today. Sloppy, stupid, limited grapplers, bums who use the excuse of "wrestling fairly" to cover their inadequacies, these are what constitute most tag teams. One need look no further than Greg Gagne and Jim Brunzell to see how bad tag



After Dino Bravo kicked Eric in the groin (above) Eric pays him back. The brilliant Captain Lou Albano (below) led Eric and his partner Pierre to the WWWF tag team title.



teams can be. Men have been replaced by whining babies, always complaining about the big bad bullies who beat them up.

When The Lumberjacks become as famous as they should be, tag team wrestling will change. Soon we'll see men again in command, harking back to the Golden Era of The Executioners and the Valiant Brothers. Now those were champions.

I have long believed tag team wrestling is still in its infancy; the best tag team is yet to come. The Lumberjacks are an important step forward in the development of this part of the sport. Unlike the unimaginative "scientific" teams, The Lumberjacks are always changing, developing new methods of winning. So what if their maneuvers are a little unorthodox? Today's innovation is tomorrow's classic move.

All those interested in tag team wrestling will watch The Lumberjacks with interest. These grapplers have already shown their dominance over the opposition; not that great an accomplishment considering the opposition. Still, these pioneers are to be congratulated for showing up DeNucci and Bravo. Thankfully, the ex-champions won't be able to destroy tag team wrestling any further. They are washed up and should be thrown out with the dirty water.

(Continued on page 46)

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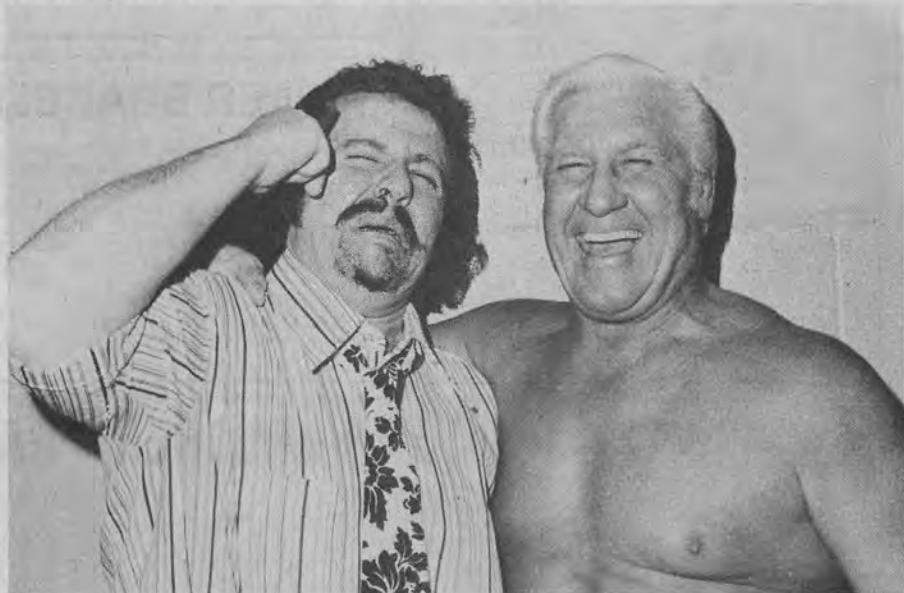
THE
FAIRGROUNDS
RICHMOND

D AMN, THIS FOOD is awful, I thought tiredly, playing with the limp strands of spaghetti which rejected the watery, brown-red gravy. I put my elbows on the greasy table top, looked disbelievingly at the waitress with the brown-rimmed glasses, white nurses' shoes, orthopedic stockings and garish orange lips, and angrily dumped two bucks on the plate.

What the hell have I gotten myself into, I wondered, almost aloud, as I made my way past



Some bad things are being said about WWWF champion Bob Backlund (above). Captain Lou Albano and Fred Blassie (below) are two of the men believed to be trying to ruin the champion's career.



the unfeeling beings who crowded the path to the diner door. Pushing open the cracked glass, I stepped out onto the lovely streets of Corning, Iowa. What kind of place is this for a frenetic New Yorker, I pondered, leaping into my Spitfire.

So, here I am in Corning, Iowa, having finished talking to my personal source. Despite the caked lips, soiled brown shirt, worn pants and battered shoes, the ever-present bottle of Muscatel, he could be trusted. Damn, thank God I escaped that, I had thought after leaving him.

But now my thoughts turned to the most pressing and, indeed, most unnerving problem: my source had informed me, in restrained, terrified whispers, that one of the three federation world champions was about to resign. Why? Didn't know. Who? Didn't know. Was it the truth?

God, that's why I found myself in Corning, Iowa, of all places.

Bob Backlund? Nick Bockwinkle? Harley Race? Which one? And why?

Now, since the three federations dip into Florida,

(Continued on page 48)

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**'TOP
SECRET'**

Behind the Dressing Room Door

**by Randy
Gordon**

I CAN'T TELL you how many times I've seen The Spoiler. I've interviewed him, argued with him, been threatened by him—even had dinner with him. However, it took our veteran reporter Matt Brock to convince me that Spoiler is a troubled man, looking for something more.

"A man's words only tell a story," Brock said to me, "but his eyes tell the truth." Then he added, "Look at The Spoiler's eyes the next time he speaks to you. Look at them closely."

Sure enough, on a recent trip to Florida, I entered Spoiler's dressing room disguised as a 60-year-old radio sportscaster (The Spoiler has threatened to claw me to death if he ever sees me again). The Spoiler talked quite openly to this "60-year-old sportscaster." He said some pretty tough things, such as "Let the fans boo me—I love it when those morons boo!" and "Jack Brisco wishes he were just like me. The man wishes he could do the things I can do." He didn't really mean them. His eyes told me so.

Now I'm no Doctor of Psychiatry, but when I looked into Spoiler's eyes, I saw the soul of a man who feels life is passing him by. He hates his image. Despises it. He'd do anything to hear the crowd cheering him, instead of booing. I don't think it will take much work to convert this talented but notorious rulebreaker into a beloved fan favorite. He'll thank me for it, believe me!

They all thank me for helping them see the light. Dusty Rhodes has thanked me. Stan Hansen has thanked me. Blackjack

(Continued on page 50)

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NEWS FROM THE

If you would like your area of the country represented in these reports, while also being officially credited with your own by-line, send us reports of the matches you attend. You will have the thrill of seeing your name in an internationally known magazine while at the same time helping to improve the quality of wrestling in your area. So why not give it a try? You will be glad you did!

Send your reports to: Correspondent Editor, Box 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571.

COLUMBUS, GA. By Kim Jones



ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER
vs.
STAN HANSEN



The wild Sudanese savage, Abdullah the Butcher, lost his Columbus Heavyweight Championship to new fan favorite Stan Hansen, after an especially vicious blood-drenched war.

OTHER BOUTS: Thunderbolt Patterson retained his Georgia Television Title by whipping The Assassin . . . Mr. Wrestling II took home 1,000 silver dollars with his conquest of Ole Anderson.

HAMPTON, VA. By Brian Patterson



BLACKJACK MULLIGAN
vs.
MASKED SUPERSTAR



Blackjack Mulligan and the Masked Superstar locked horns in a \$10,000 bounty match. It resulted in a double disqualification after friends of both wrestlers rushed into the ring.

OTHER BOUTS: Paul Jones defeated Greg Valentine . . . Tony Atlas was triumphant over Cyclone Negro . . . Johnny Weaver and Abe Jacobs wrestled Sgt. Goulet and Gene Anderson to a draw.

COLUMBIA, S.C. By Ronnie Crim



PAUL JONES
vs.
BARON VON RASCHKE



NWA TV champ Paul Jones put his crown on the line against Baron Von Raschke. After a tough battle, Jones retained his title with a masterful maneuver to dispose of Von Raschke.

OTHER BOUTS: Blackjack Mulligan and Rick Steamboat stomped Ric Flair and Greg Valentine . . . Jerry Stubbs whipped Mr. X II . . . Roberto Soto won by disqualification over Gene Anderson.

WRESTLING CAPITALS



SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

By Charlie Dee



RICK STEAMBOAT
vs.
HARLEY RACE



Though technically Rick Steamboat wrestled a far superior match, Harley Race retained his NWA crown with several surprise maneuvers, some legal, some not, to save himself at critical moments. **OTHER BOUTS:** Killer Karl Krupp was disqualified after choking an irate Ivan Putski on the ropes . . . Former Southwest TV champ Tully Blanchard failed to regain his title from Alberto Madril.

CHICAGO, ILL.

By Mike Morsch



BRUISER
vs.
ANGELO MOSCA



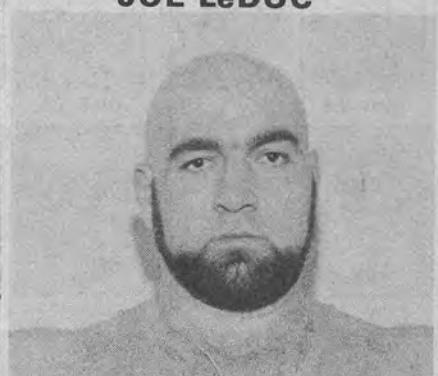
Bruiser met Angelo Mosca in a special grudge chain-match. Chained together at the ankles with the referee holding the key, the furious action soon dissolved into absolute war. **OTHER BOUTS:** Rufus R. Jones and Bobo Brazil were disqualified against Ray Stevens and Pat Patterson . . . Jim Valiant stopped Pat O'Conner . . . The Masked Stranger upset Paul Christy.

KNOXVILLE, TENN.

By Tim Hart



HARLEY RACE
vs.
LUMBERJACK
JOE LeDUC



Harley Race successfully defended his NWA belt by defeating Lumberjack Joe LeDuc. Both men were soaked in blood and fury until Race mercifully ended the titanic struggle. **OTHER BOUTS:** Roy Lee Welch and Ron Garvin wrestled to a draw . . . Ron Fuller, Robert Fuller and Bob Armstrong triumphed over Ron Wright, The Assassin and Don Carson.

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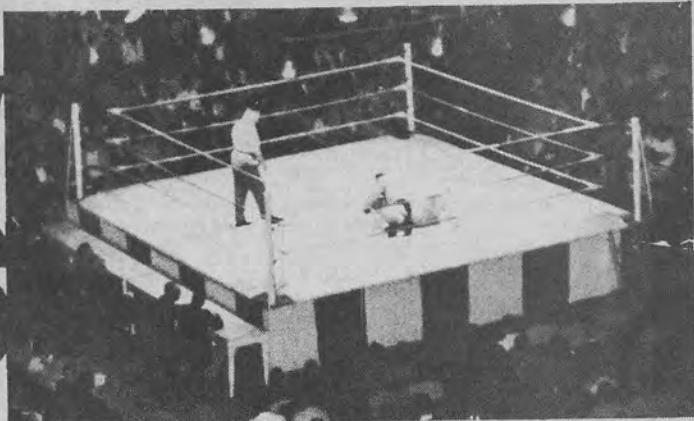
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YOUR RATINGS REALLY STINK

What is this...? Don't get me wrong, I respect most of the things your magazine prints, but your WWWF ratings really stink!

What does your magazine have against Mil Mascaras? Mil has proven himself against the

he's rated below them. Prove me wrong by finding a couple of wrestlers who have beaten Mil over the past couple of months... or even over the last year or two.

ROD MOORE
Tomahawk, Wisc.



One fan is mad because he feels that Mil Mascaras (left) is not rated fairly. Dusty Rhodes (above) teamed with Mil and Andre the Giant (below)—an unbeatable trio.



best wrestlers in the world, whether they use scientific or rulebreaking maneuvers, and he is being treated like trash! Mil has shown his great ability by easily beating Superstar Graham and by defeating Ken Patera and Spiros Arion, and

THOUGHT YOUR MAG HAD CLASS

Until now, I thought your magazine had class, but you made me sick when you wrote how Mil Mascaras, Dusty Rhodes, and Andre the Giant form a team that all wrestlers

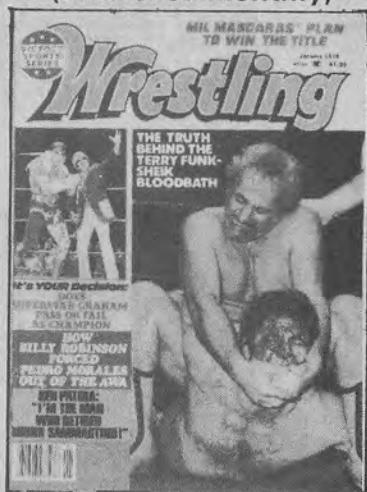
are afraid of. The truth is that other wrestlers simply don't want to waste their time wrestling this team. Mil Mascaras is so ugly and

(Continued on page 52)

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Eutawville, SC 29048
Likes all sports. Tim
Woods his favorite.
Likes good guys.
Anyone for pen pals.



MICHAEL DEMPSEY (11)
15 Laidlaw Ave
Jersey City, NJ 07306
Likes soccer. Tony
Garea his favorite.
Likes good guys.
Anyone for pen pals.

IT WAS EXACTLY the sort of unpredictable outcome which makes sports so intriguing. Yet Wahoo McDaniel's somber, teary features displayed no amusement. Nor did his manager for this evening, Johnny Valentine, look at all happy.

The two men sat in the quiet of the dressing room, surrounded by the memory of the NWA title that flipped over the top rope. A title owned by Harley Race.

A title worth about one million dollars.

"We worked and struggled and plotted every single inch of the way," Wahoo said sadly, his eyes reddened from tears. "But I didn't think this would happen. And neither did Johnny."

"Wahoo getting disqualified was the last thing we thought would happen. No way did Wahoo mean

The match nears the fatal finale for Wahoo (right) because Race will soon go over the ropes. McDaniel is on the warpath (below) as Race weakens.



For Wahoo McDaniel, money was no object. It was to be victory at any price. But Wahoo, like all athletes, learned success in sports can't be bought for all the money in the world

to throw Harley over the top rope," Johnny said, pensively rubbing his thick hands over his chin. "It was an accident. An accident which cost Wahoo the title he deserves."

This match took place in Houston. To recount the events, referee Bronko Lubich fell out of the ring. While Lubich was still out of the ring, McDaniel picked Race up and threw him over the top rope. Alternate referee Danny McShain counted Race out, but Lubich, from his prone position outside the ring, saw what happened and immediately disqualified McDaniel.

"I wanted to bounce him off the ropes and jump on top of him for the pin," Wahoo explained. "But I

slipped and, instead of Race bouncing off the ropes, he went sailing over them."

Race cackled sneeringly when apprised of McDaniel's explanation.

"He said that?" Race sneered. "What a fool. He tried to bring me back into the ring and pin me. He doesn't mention that, does he? The bum!"

That final action is the subject of considerable dispute. It seemed that McDaniel did drag Race back into the ring and then slam him to the canvas and covered for a pin. However, whatever happened then didn't matter—the match had already officially ended.

"As soon as McDaniel threw

What seemed to pain McDaniel the most was the careful preparation he had undertaken for this match, a training which Johnny Valentine personally supervised.

"We had this beautiful strategy worked out," Johnny said. "We knew exactly how to attack Race. The most important thing was for Wahoo to keep his calm.

"In past matches, Wahoo has been too sensitive to Race's vulgar racist remarks. I'm not saying Wahoo shouldn't be bothered by this, but he has to keep things in perspective. The best way for him to answer back Race is to whip him and take the belt."

(Continued on page 56)

WAHOO McDANIEL'S MILLION DOLLAR MISTAKE



him over the top rope, the match was legally over," Lubich said. "So whatever happened after that doesn't count."

McDaniel claims that his and Harley's return to the ring indicated Race's belief that the match was *not* over.

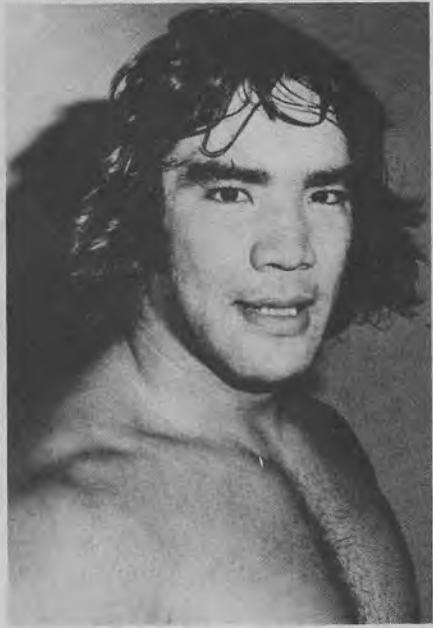
"If Race thought the match was over, why did he continue to wrestle with me?" Wahoo demanded. "He knew it was an accident. He knew that! He knew I'm not the type to toss someone over the top rope. This isn't right, but there's nothing I can do about it. Nothing at all."

Wahoo is in a bad way as Race repeatedly kneedrops him (left). The champion is about to be tossed off his perch (right) during one of Wahoo's best moments.



NAMES MAKI

If his most recent outing against NWA champion HARLEY RACE is any indication about how his future may shape up, RICK STEAMBOAT is destined to become NWA champion. Rick was no less than brilliant as he dazzled the veteran champion with lightning fast maneuvers and devastating holds. Most observers agree that the next time Rick clashes with Race the belt will change hands because Rick is getting better and better every time he wrestles.



RICK STEAMBOAT

THE MASKED ASSASSIN is in Georgia and his plans are to run MR. WRESTLING II out of the territory. "There is only room for one masked wrestler in Georgia!" growls the Assassin. "Wrestling II must go!" . . . United States heavyweight champion RIC FLAIR was beaten to a pulp by BLACK-JACK MULLIGAN. Only the



ALBANO & "THE ANIMAL"

unscheduled "helping hand" of the MASKED SUPERSTAR saved Flair from a lengthy stay in the hospital . . . No, you're not seeing things if you think you saw GEORGE "The Animal" STEELE with green coloring all over his tongue. You did indeed see a green tongue! Steele's manager, CAPTAIN LOU ALBANO, states the tongue has not been colored as a publicity stunt. "The man is off the wall!" exclaims Albano. "His gastric liquids and the overflowing juices of his pancreas and lower abdominal bicuspid areas expound together to form a coloring on his tongue. Everyone knows this is quite normal in crazy persons! So stop asking such stupid questions!"

DUSTY RHODES has publicly stated that SPOILER II is none other than BOBBY DUNCUM. Sorry Dusty but that can't be true. Duncum sent us a photo of himself with SPOILER I and SPOILER II so it's difficult

to believe your claim . . . BARON VON RASCHKE and GREG VALENTINE have combined forces and taken the NWA tag team title from PAUL JONES and RICK STEAMBOAT . . . Also on the title path, a new



TONY ATLAS



KING KONG MOSCA

team that fans are crazy about, TONY ATLAS and JAY YOUNGBLOOD . . . ANGELO MOSCA does not want to wrestle DICK SLATER. Mosca, who holds the Georgia state title, feels it would be a big waste of time, citing that Slater

N' NEWS

Bill Apter
reporting...

is a rank preliminary wrestler.

DINO BRAVO and DOMINIC DeNUCCI are brokenhearted that they let their fans down when they lost the WWWF tag team belts to THE LUMBERJACKS. They are undecided if they will stay together as a team or go after single matches . . . FIGHTING HARA is Japan's newest and deadliest export. He is wrestling in sections of Canada and providing the area with top competition . . . IVAN KOLOFF is being chased all around the east coast by IVAN PUTSKI. The two never settled their feud when both were in Florida. Putski wants Koloff's blood now! By the way, Koloff and OLE ANDERSON are the Georgia tag team champions. Ole says that next to his brother Gene, Koloff is the best partner he has ever had.

Texas Brass Knuckles champion TERRY FUNK withstood the full pressure of the German clawhold applied by KILLER KARL KRUPP. Terry went on to successfully retain his title . . . BRUISER BRODIE is the man DALE VALENTINE puts at the top of his most wanted list . . . KEN LUCAS paid THE BEAST back for all the damage he has done to Ken's friends. The animalistic wrestler needed 25 stitches after Ken rendered him a bloody mess.

SGT. JACQUES GOULET wants his "millions of diehard fans to know I am wrestling in the mid-Atlantic area where I am beating all the so-called superstars!" . . . Have you seen Ken Patera since he changed his looks? Kenny now sports



SGT. JACQUES GOULET

short, brown hair . . . Fans in the WWWF demanding the return of MIL MASCARAS . . . I can't tell you the details right now, but BRUNO SAMMARTINO is keeping a secret under wraps concerning a full-time comeback! You'll know about it as soon as I do!



BRUNO SAMMARTINO

The MISSOURI MAULER has taken on the task of managing the hated CYCLONE NEGRO . . . THE GRAND WIZARD swears there is no rift between SUPERSTAR GRAHAM and half-brother "CRAZY" LUKE GRAHAM. "All is serene," he assures . . . MIGHTY IGOR has



NICK BOCKWINKLE

accepted some matches in the AWA hoping to land a title shot against champion NICK BOCKWINKLE . . . BOBO BRAZIL has also ventured to the area and is teaming periodically with RUFUS R. JONES.

That's all for now. See you next month!

HOTSEAT

BRUNO SAMMARTINO: "HAVE THE FANS FORGOTTEN ME?"

HE IS THE "Living Legend," the yardstick against which every scientific wrestler is measured, against which every champion is compared. His brilliance within the ring, his unstinting generosity outside the squared circle, has earned him the loving adoration of millions of wrestling fans. He is Bruno Sammartino.

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY
BILL APTER

Q: Bruno, thank you for coming to the Hotseat.

A: Oh, it is my pleasure, Bill.

Q: Let's get right to the heart of things, Bruno. You have been in semi-retirement for the past few months, correct?

A: That is correct. Occasionally, I have been wrestling with my good friend, Dominic DeNucci. We have been teaming up.

- Q: Why semi-retirement?
A: I got very weary of the daily travel, the constant pressure, the everyday grind of it. I needed time for myself, to put things in perspective.

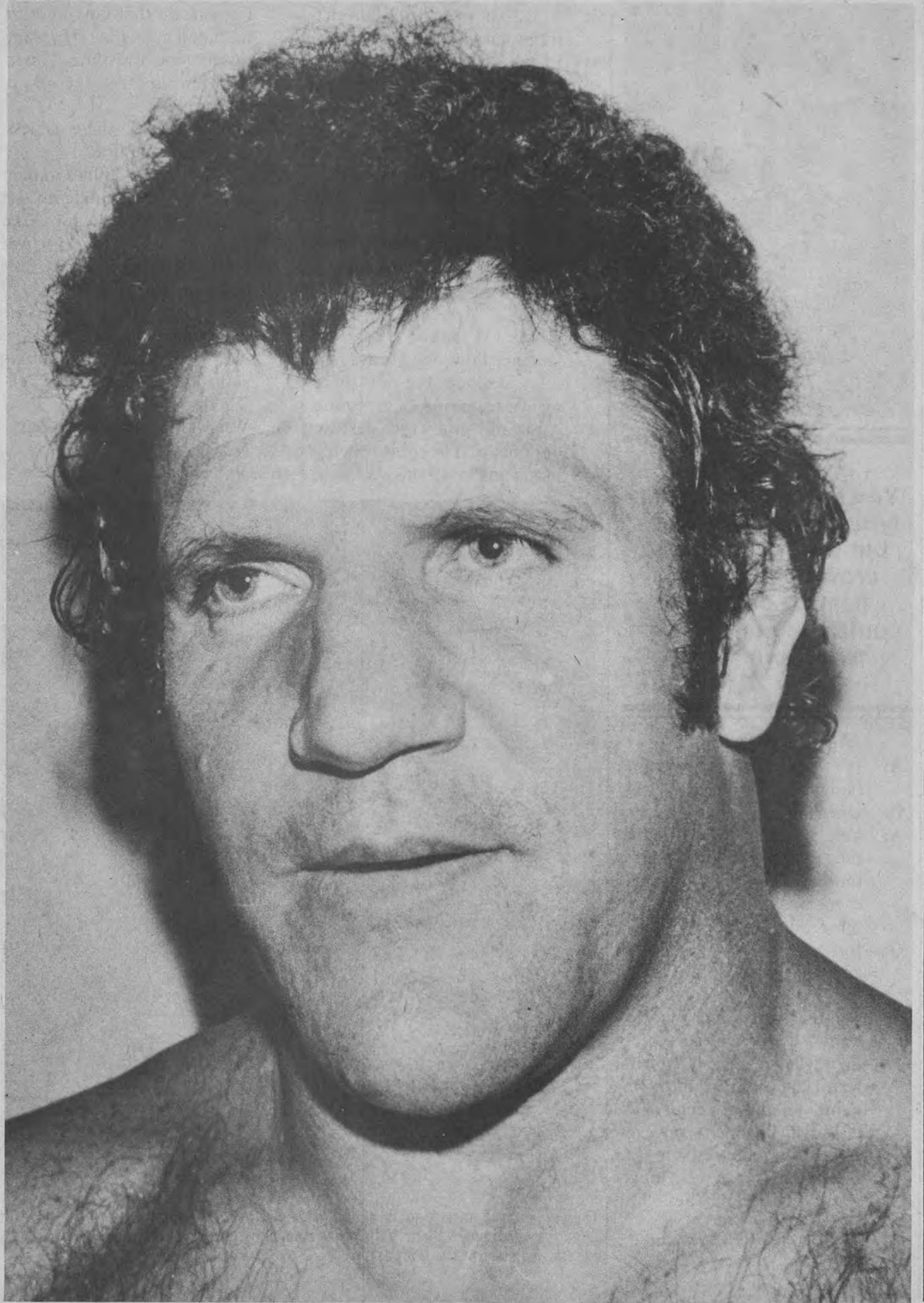
- Q: But you couldn't give it up completely, right?

“
I got very weary of the daily travel, the constant pressure, the everyday grind of it. I needed time for myself, to put things in perspective.
”

- A: No, you do not easily give up something you love so much. I know that wrestling is a very important part of my life. I could never just stop wrestling. That is why I was wrestling infrequently.

- Q: Isn't it difficult wrestling like that, you know, not going full-blown like you used to?
A: Good point, Bill. At times it became worse than not wrestling at all because it was like a tease, see? I saw that all my skills were still there. But I do not think fans realize how tiring the life of a professional wrestler is. It is difficult to do it every single night. After a while you just become numb. That is not good. Not when the thing you love most in life becomes a chore.

- Q: Has that changed?
A: A little.
Q: Could you please be specific?
A: Well, now that I have decided to wrestle on a larger scale, going to Australia, the Asbury Park benefit matches for Juvenile Diabetics, I find myself getting back in the flow of wrestling again.
Q: You're afraid the fans have





“
You know, I am not the type of man who cries, but when I heard the crowd chanting my name, I could not control the tears which came to my eyes.
”

forgotten you?

A: Is that a question or answer (laughs)?

Q: Question.

A: Yes, you always worry that the fans forget you. Even though I get loads of mail every week, it is not the same thing.

Q: But then there was that amazing response at Asbury Park.

A: Oh, that was wonderful. You know, I am not the type of man who cries, but when I heard the crowd chanting my name, I could not control the tears which came to my eyes. After that incredible fan response, I was no longer really worried they had forgotten me.

Q: You seem to be qualifying that.

A: Qualifying?

Q: Yes, that they really haven't forgotten you.

A: I have always wondered, have the fans forgotten me? I know they still love me, but that is very different from my returning to the wrestling wars. That will be the test.

Q: What do you think will happen?

A: I don't know. Things have changed in wrestling since I was champion.

Q: How?

A: There is more senseless violence now. We always had a lot of blood, but now there seems to be more wrestlers who only want to destroy opponents. The sport is being lost beneath all this violence.

I am afraid that fans want to see blood more than they want to see good wrestling. It is a frightening trend and it concerns me.

Q: Do you think there is less respect for the title?

A: Well, men like Billy Graham and Nick Bockwinkle do not know how to act like champions. They do not realize how much effect they have on the fans, especially the younger ones. Again, we had bad champions, but none who were quite so horrible as someone like Race and Bockwinkle.

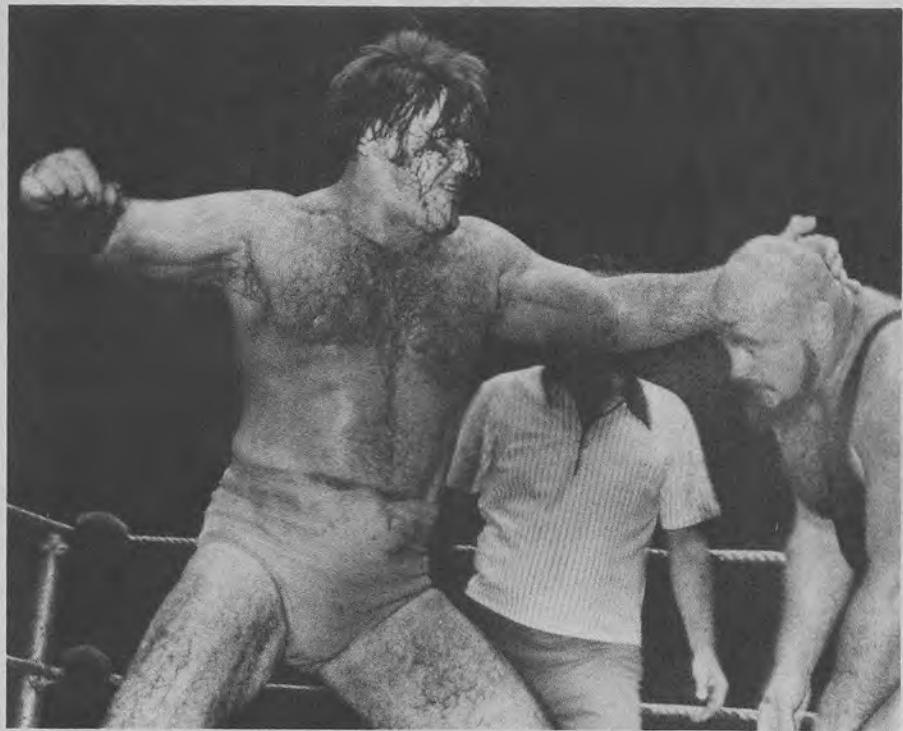
Q: What about Bob Backlund?

A: Not bad (grins).

Q: Not bad but not good?



The legendary Sammartino is about to deliver a powerhouse right to the head of "Handsome" Jimmy Valiant. Valiant has been one of Bruno's recent opponents during several matches in the Midwest.



A classic match (above) as Sammartino brawls against Russian Bear Ivan Koloff in 1975. Superstar Graham readies a chop to Bruno's throat (below) in the bout in which Graham took Bruno's WWWF title.



Q: He isn't bad. We will see how he does when he matures more. He is still very green, but a nice fellow.

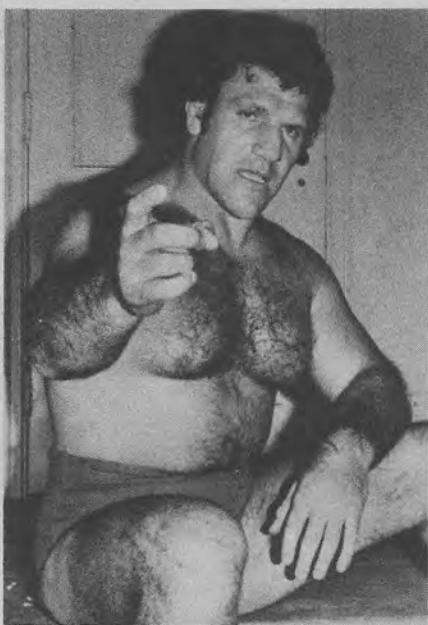
Q: Do you feel wrestling has entered a crucial stage?

A: Yes, yes, I believe so. I think, again, there is too much emphasis given to violence, without any meaning. You know, if two men get carried away there is always the

chance of someone getting injured. But now you have madmen like Abdullah the Butcher and Killer Karl Kox taking over. I do not think wrestling can survive if rule-breakers take over every federation title.

Q: What can be done?

A: I am not sure, that is being honest. You can only win a title in the ring. There are



“It is very glamorous and exciting to be champion, but I have already done that. While I still love wrestling, I would like to do more with my skill than wear a belt.”

”

enough talented wrestlers around to challenge the title-holders. Whether they can win is something else.

Q: Can Bruno Sammartino win?
A: I am not sure Bruno Sammartino wants to win the belt.

Q: Why not?
A: It is very glamorous and exciting to be champion, but I have already done that. While I still love wrestling, I would like to do more with my skill than wear a belt.

Q: Like helping children?
A: Yes, the fact that my reputation was able to raise so much money for the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation was very rewarding.

Q: Bruno, it's always a delight talking to you.
A: Thank you, Bill, I enjoyed it myself.

HOW YOU CAN END THE CHAMPIONSHIP REIGN OF NICK BOCWINKLE !



IT HAS HAPPENED BEFORE. Periodically, enraged citizens will initiate a recall petition to have an especially incompetent public official removed from the city payrolls.

In the past, this magazine has solicited fan opinions on whether a particular wrestler should give up his title. But that was only an advisory move, letters which could only counsel or suggest, but not compel.

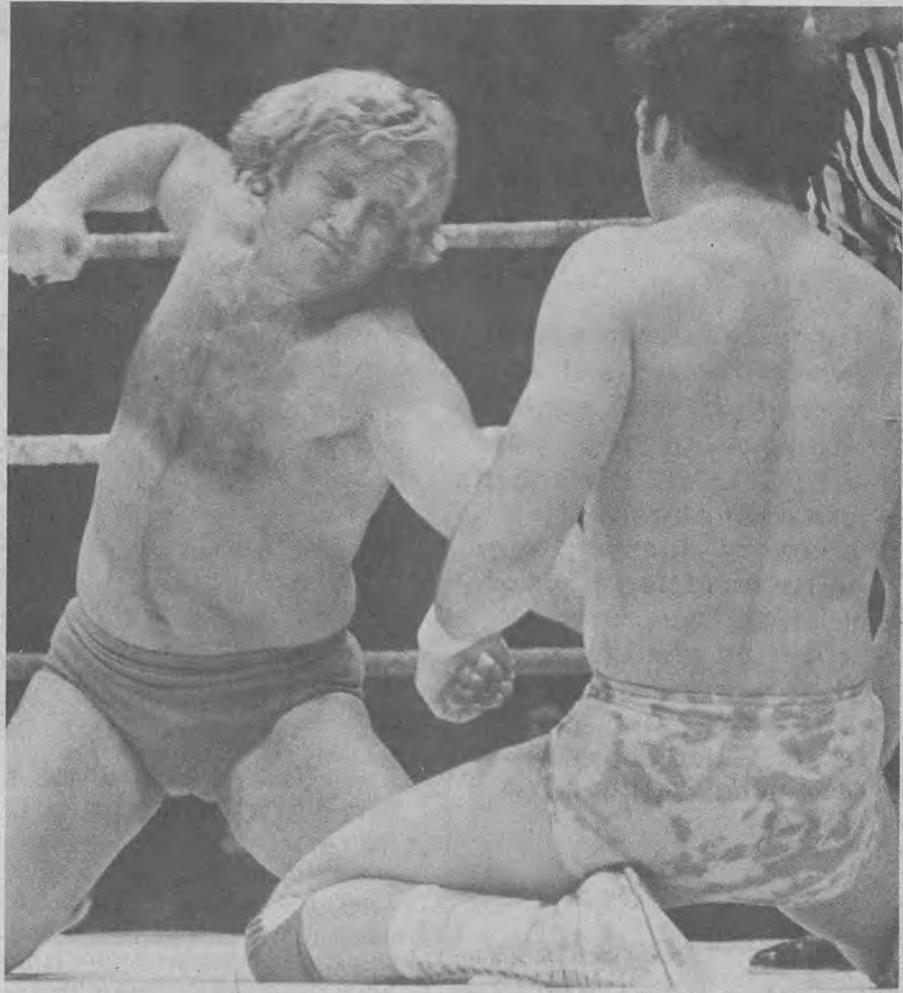
Events of recent months have changed all that. Now the wrestling fans of America have the startling opportunity to impel a dramatic decision by the American Wrestling Association.

Stop Nick Bockwinkle. End his reign. And you the fans can do it!

"Even though we are the officials, we are powerless to strip Bockwinkle of his AWA belt," said a federation official. "While we do have grounds for this, it would only cause a tremendous court fight. No way Bockwinkle and Bobby Heenan would let that go without a fight.

(Continued on page 58)

The fans have more power than they suspect. This is the time when they can flex their muscles for the good of wrestling. Everyone who reads this story will become a crusader against Nick Bockwinkle's reign of terror!



Left, opposite page: AWA champion Nick Bockwinkle and his manager, Bobby "The Brain" Heenan display the championship belt—the one both have brought shame to. Above: Against contender Greg Gagne, Bockwinkle holds the front of Greg's trunks so he can't move while Nick punches him.

SPECIAL FAN BALLOT

"Should Nick Bockwinkle Be Stripped of the AWA Title?"

YES

COMMENTS: _____

NO

SEND PETITION TO:

"BAN BOCKWINKLE!"
c/o INSIDE WRESTLING
Box 48
Rockville Centre, NY 11571

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

TOP WRESTLE YOUR QUESTION

Do you have a question which concerns all of wrestling? Well, each month in INSIDE WRESTLING, the sport's greatest stars will answer a question sent in by a reader. If you wish to have your question answered by the stars, send it to: ASK THE STARS, INSIDE WRESTLING, Box 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571

The "Question of the Month" is:

"Should foreigners be permitted to wrestle in American federations?"

**Submitted by:
Buddy
Zimmerman;
Columbus,
Georgia**



NICK BOCKWINKLE

"Not at all. Who needs these grease-balls. They can't even speak the language. Bunch of filthy little rats scurrying aboard ships. American wrestling is for Americans. We got enough wrestlers born here without this foreign trash."



BILLY ROBINSON

"Of course we should, and I don't say that just because I'm British. I say it because by allowing different peoples to wrestle here, you get an influx of different cultures and styles, which is very healthy for the game."



KEN PATERA

"Why do you think we got so many diseases here? You ever try and take a shower after one of them foul-smelling aliens have been in there? It stinks. That's how they win their matches, by causing you to faint. Who needs those bums. Only way they should let 'em wrestle is if they're blond and American. Like someone we all know and love."



RIC FLAIR

"I would personally rent a boat and take all of them back to where they came from, like Rocky Johnson to Kenya, Putski to Polackville, Mascaras to the land of Tortillas, all those fools without citizenship. We built this land, we paid for it, we own it, enough of these freeloaders. Get rid of them!"

WRESTLERS ANSWER OF THE MONTH



MIL MASCARAS

"Of course they should. I think this is a ridiculous question. America is a land of immigrants and it is un-American to think of denying natives of other lands the opportunity to wrestle here."



BOB BACKLUND

"All I care about is the quality of my opponent. I don't care if he's from Duluth or Moscow or Pluto. When I wrestle someone I just want a good clean match. And I find a lot of foreign-born wrestlers have a genuine sense of fair play."



ANTONIO INOKI

"That would make a mockery of wrestling, a sport where everyone has an equal opportunity. I think the fans would get bored by only Americans. I think fans like to see foreign moves in the ring."



ERNIE LADD

"Hey, super idea man. But since it's such a super idea, let's go all out. We could ship Dusty Rhodes to Fatville, Bob Backlund to Buffalo Bob's show and Bruno Sammartino into a pizza oven. Leave only the strong, which foreigners ain't. All they do is lower the quality of the sport which pays me so well."



HARLEY RACE

"Definitely not, and this is something I've believed in for a long time. What with all these foreigners, a lotta fine American boys can't get good matches because scum like Mascaras and Putski take the good matches. Throw 'em out and lock the doors."



IVAN PUTSKI

"When I was a small child, shortly after Russian tanks destroyed my village, I dreamed of coming to this great land. America has given me and others a chance to make a life here. I would not stop another homeless refugee from getting the same chance."

Andre the Giant & Bob Backlund:

FIVE FINGERS CLASPED around five fingers. Ten innocuous limbs which threaten the entire structure of wrestling. It could be the end of grappling as we know it.

Ten tightened fingers. Five belong to Bob Backlund. Five belong to Andre the Giant.

They form one ugly threat as startling as it is unbelievable. Perhaps it is not even true.

Let us recount events of previous months so as to put this devastating agreement in its proper perspective. One by one, fan favorite wrestlers are leaving the World Wide Wrestling Federation.

Mil Mascaras.

Dusty Rhodes.

Bob Backlund. BOB BACKLUND?!

The champion cannot leave the area, can he?

Such an impulsive shaking of the head would be quite erroneous. Because this is what the verbal agreement is all about.

Since Andre has wrestled overseas far more than Backlund, the Giant seized upon an idea to act as Backlund's non-WWWF manager. Thus, when Backlund travels abroad and in American non-WWWF areas, Andre will be



HOW THIS HANDSHAKE MAY DESTROY W



In Japan, Andre kicks Sakaguchi (left). Backlund wrestles Inoki (above), a man Andre has met many times. Sakaguchi, a possible Backlund opponent, can't get anywhere against the huge Andre (right).

Their hands clasped and a shudder of fear coursed through the wrestling community. When Andre the Giant shook hands with Bob Backlund, even their friends feared this was the beginning of the end

his manager. Combining Andre's exhaustive knowledge with Backlund's eager willingness and Arnold Skoaland's blessings this may prove to be disastrous for the future of wrestling.

At a cursory glance, this might not seem all that terrible. But what this does, in effect, is weaken Backlund when he has to defend his crown against the rulebreakers. Think for a moment. Harley Race. Nick Bockwinkle. Superstar Billy Graham. Three champions, three rulebreakers. Now Backlund wins the belt from Graham. Fluke or a trend? Is wrestling heading down the road to cleanliness or will it remain in the land of the rulebreakers.

If Backlund loses the belt, it can start a seemingly irreversible trend back toward rulebreaker

monopoly. A trend which could signal the end of wrestling.

That is why this decision by Backlund is so dangerous. If he spreads himself too thin, he will be unable to properly defend his crown. Backlund is the last line of defense against the hordes of rulebreakers. The very future of wrestling depends on his retaining the WWWF belt.

Then why is he doing this?

"I think I have an obligation to wrestle those men the fans hate wherever they may be," Backlund said. "It's not like I'm going to burn myself out. I take great care of myself and I know I can stay in excellent physical shape, no matter the schedule."

"But I think it is very nearsighted to focus on rulebreakers only in my area. I owe it to the fans to rid the

world of these animals.

"And Andre has generously offered to set things up. Arnold supports this decision. I think it'll accomplish a great deal."

But not what Backlund thinks, for there is an element of unsuspecting duplicity being practiced on these three fine men. It is entirely possible that Andre is an unwitting dupe of Lou Albano.

Not that Andre has had any communication with Lou, save for debating the merits of Italian and French wines. But listen to Albano's reaction to this proposal.

"It's great, man, just great. Backlund'll be wrestling all over the place, then one of us will shoot that Howdy-Doody face right into a pit of blood. Great, great, but you know what else? We didn't have to

(Continued on page 62)

RESTLING!!!

INSIDE WRESTLING'S TOP FIVE

These Ratings Are Compiled With The Assistance Of Top Wrestlers, Promoters, And Reporters. They Are Universally Accepted As Official

World Wide Wrestling Federation



Champion:
BOB BACKLUND



1—GEORGE STEELE

American Wrestling Association



Champion:
NICK BOCKWINKLE



1—RAY STEVENS

National Wrestling Alliance



Champion:
HARLEY RACE



1—DUSTY RHODES

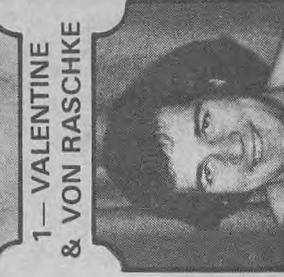
Tag Teams



1—VALENTINE
& VON RASCHKE

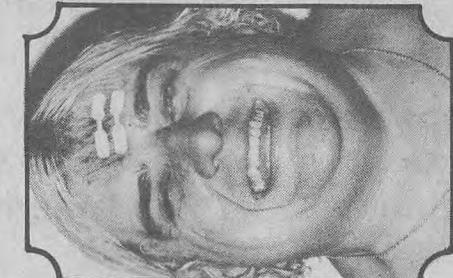


1—Ivan Koloff

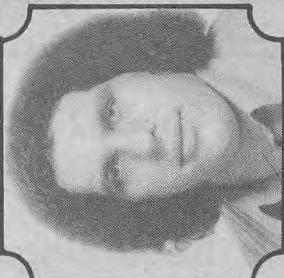


2—KEN PATERA

Most Popular Wrestlers



1—DUSTY RHODES



2—ANDRE THE
GIANT

Most Hated Wrestlers



1—Ivan Koloff



2—KEN PATERA



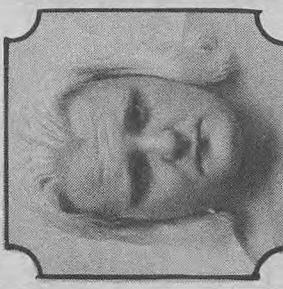
2—GREG GAGNE &
JIM BRUNZELL



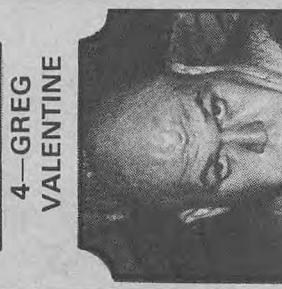
3—JACK & JERRY
BRISCO



3—RIC FLAIR



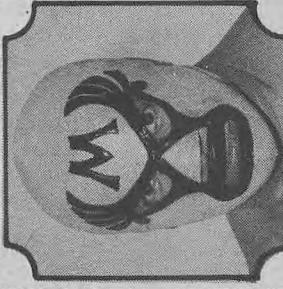
4—GREG
VALENTINE



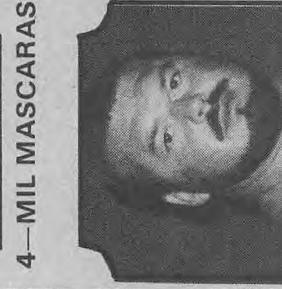
5—GEORGE STEELE



3—RICK
STEAMBOAT



4—MIL MASCARAS



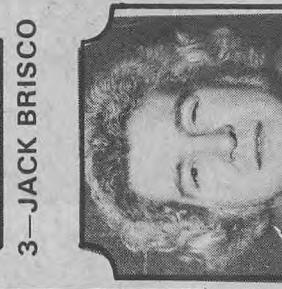
5—IVAN PUTSKI



2—RIC FLAIR



3—JACK BRISCO



4—KEN PATERA



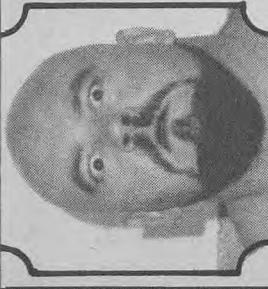
2—CRUSHER



3—VERNE GAGNE



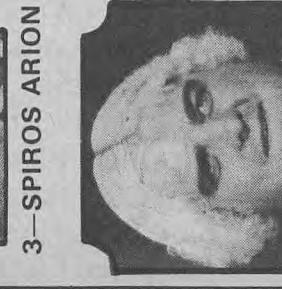
4—BILLY ROBINSON



2—Ivan Koloff



3—SPIROS ARION



4—DUSTY RHODES

4—THE LUMBER-
JACKS

5—Ivan Koloff &
Ole Anderson

6—RICK STEAMBOAT
& Paul Jones

7—Mr. Sato &
Mr. Saito

8—Mike Graham &
Steve Keirn

9—Ray Stevens &
Pat Patterson

10—Dino Bravo &
Dominic DeNucci

6—ANGELO MOSCA
7—ABDULLAH THE
BUTCHER

8—THE SHEIK
9—ERNIE LADD
10—SPIROS ARION

6—MR. WRESTLING
7—
8—JACK BRISCO
9—BOB BACKLUND
10—TONY ATLAS

6—ANGELO MOSCA
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8—
9—
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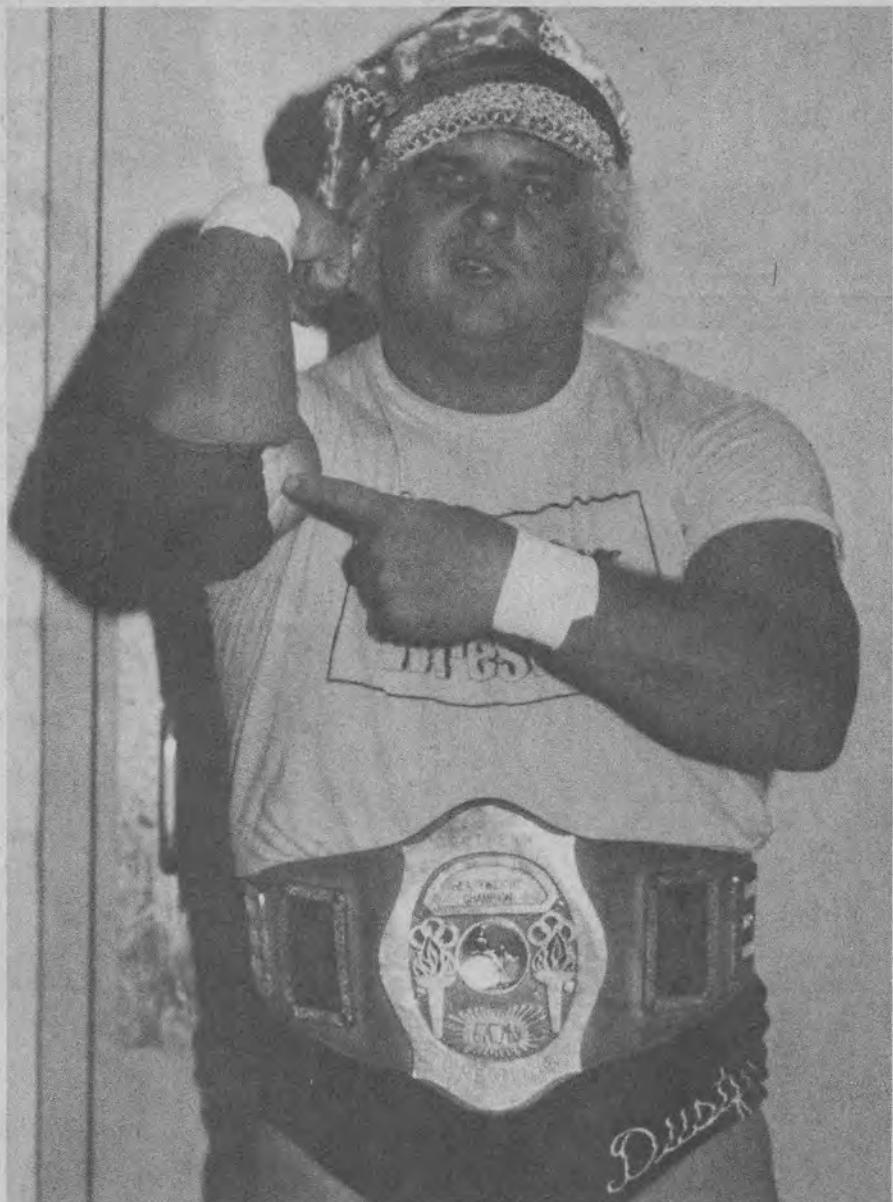
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Notice the elbow pad on Dusty's right arm (left). Is it loaded with a metal object? A combination headlock and bionic elbowsmash (above) punished Nick Bockwinkle in 1973.

THE SECRET BEHIND DUSTY RHODES' BIONIC ELBOW

DESPITE THE ADORATION of millions, despite the praise he has received for his brilliant scientific wrestling, one haunting component of Dusty Rhodes' career threatens to ensnare him in perpetual doubt.

The bionic elbow.

"That fat glob has metal

hidden under his elbow pad," snorted Spiros Arion.

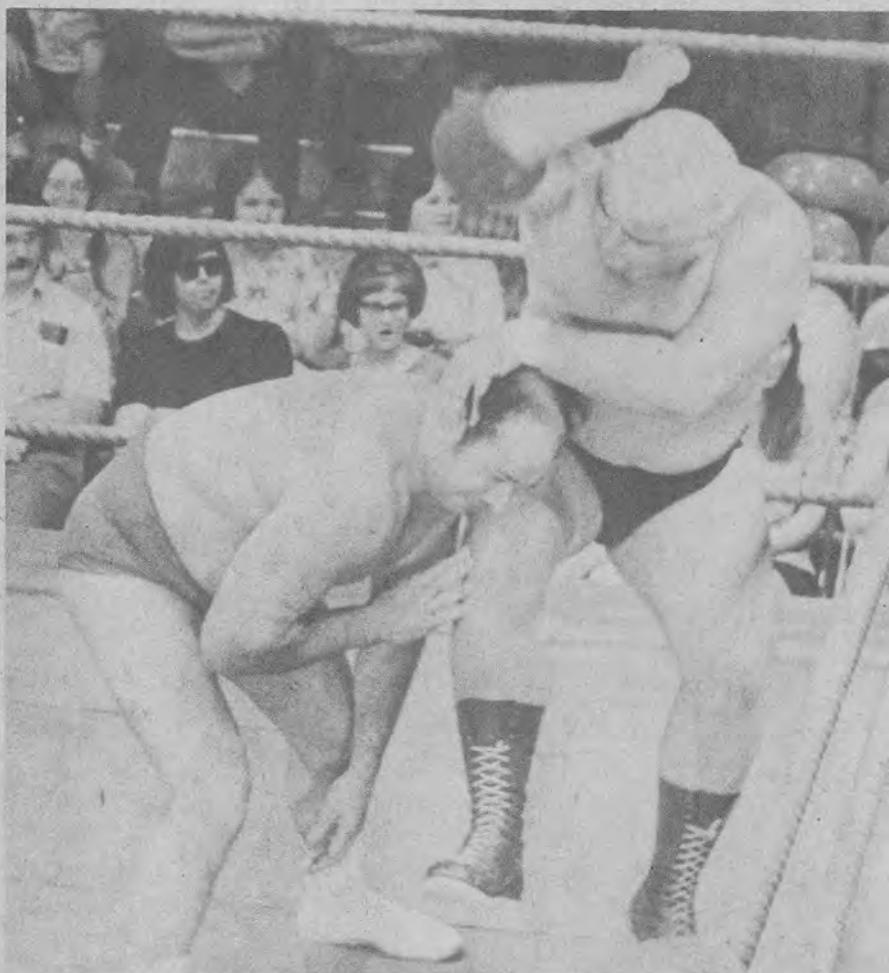
"I felt the weapon there when I grabbed him in one of my wonderful moves," declared Ivan Koloff.

"Good old Dusty Rhodes, the blond prince of the fat and ugly. We all know he loads up his elbow. He's been doing it ever since he started

wrestling. Let that mishapen hulk of recycled whale fat deny that," Ric Flair thundered.

The sole element of truth in these rulebreaker contentions is the fact, incontrovertible, that Rhodes *did* "load" up his elbow in his early days as a rulebreaker, the days of beer and thunder

With devastating power, Dusty Rhodes runs roughshod through the opposition. What is the secret of his great success? The answer is sure to astound you



when he was teaming with Dick Murdoch.

"Yeah, I did load up my elbow when I first started, during my Outlaw days," Dusty admitted with typical candor. "But, damn, that was a while ago. I don't do that anymore. I haven't for a good long time. When I first became a scientific wrestler I underwent several examinations of my elbow and baby, they found nothing, hear? Nothing."

Concededly, Dusty did consent to examinations which did fail to uncover any metal substances. Yet that has not stopped the contentions of the rule-

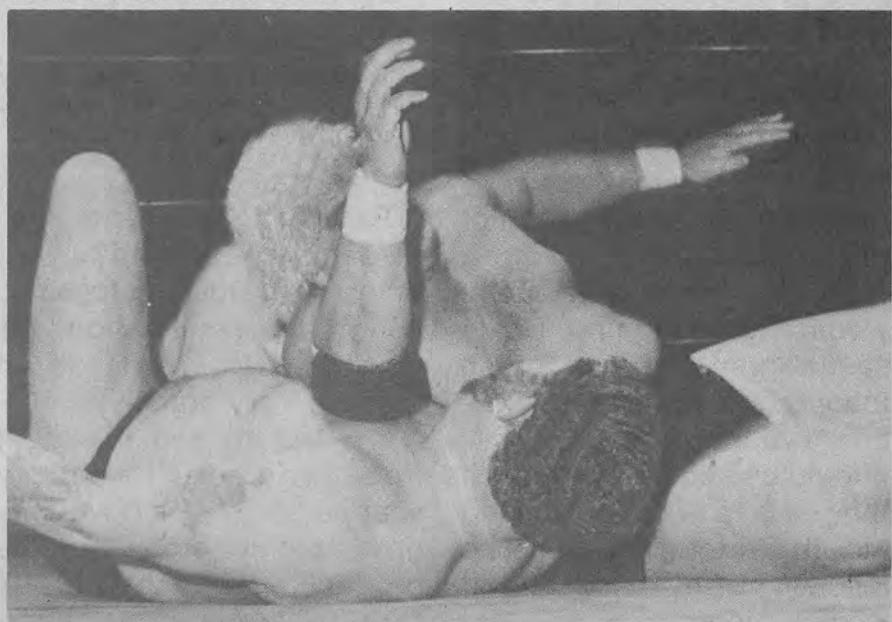
Dusty admits that in his 1972 "Outlaw" days (above) he "loaded" his elbowpad. He swears it is never loaded now. NWA champion Harley Race (below, getting the elbow) disputes Rhodes' claims.

breakers.

"So what, the doctor examines the elbow? What a large load!" snarled Fred Blassie, Arion's manager. "Me and Spiros seen the blimp geek slip somethin' into his elbow after the examination. We got pictures of it, all we got to do is find someone we can trust to develop the pictures and then we's gonna demand, demand all over the place, that you creep magazine writers print it in your creepy magazine."

Pictures? Ah, we remember well other Blassie statements, allegedly supported by cold fact, which dissolved upon the first revealing rays of truth. Still, it is something to be considered into this puzzling equation.

Yet what compounds the mystery are the numerous times when Dusty refused to





Brock Winkle is hit full force with the elbow (above). Larry Henning holds the elbow's next victim (below) in the days Dusty teamed with him.



submit to an examination of his elbow.

"Yeah, I refused and I would refuse again," Dusty said angrily. "I haven't been loading up for a long time and I've never lied, ever. I should be believed by now. If they have to keep questioning me, that's tough. I won't be insulted with these stupid examinations."



If the elbowpad is indeed loaded, Harley Race would have been killed by the impact. "They should investigate that damn elbowpad!" exclaims Race. "Rhodes puts metal objects in it. I know that for a fact!"

Ready for another bewildering episode? Two times that Dusty refused to permit an examination, his opponents went down quickly. Very quickly.

"I'd like to end this right here and now," Dusty snapped. "My elbow, my great bionic elbow, is the product of skill, baby, not any foreign substances. Any-

thing else being made of this is an attempt to smear me and my good reputation. It's not fair, dig?"

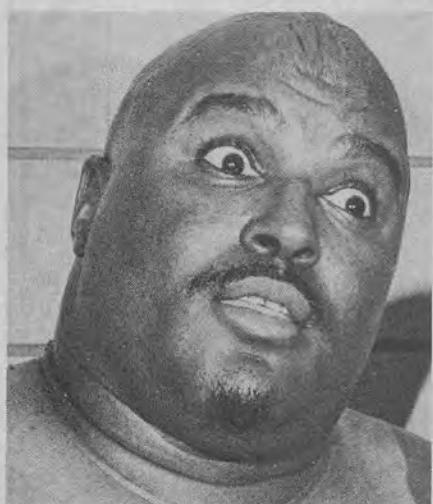
There is one man, one voice of reborn legitimacy who can unravel this heinous pattern of character assassination. A man who has been on both sides of the wars, who knows what is

(Continued on page 64)

INSIDE WRESTLING

27

CAPSULE PROFILE



PERHAPS THE MOST inhumanly despicable wrestler alive... Loves to eat raw food, especially live chickens (Editor's Note: Abdullah the Butcher's comments are through an interpreter. "I love the taste of raw food. Nothing beats a live chicken for energy and protein")... Comes from the Sudan, where he has imported the dread Flohidien substance ("Its secret is mine alone. The Flohidien has killed before. It will kill again")... Incapable of wrestling legally ("My ancestors taught me to win.

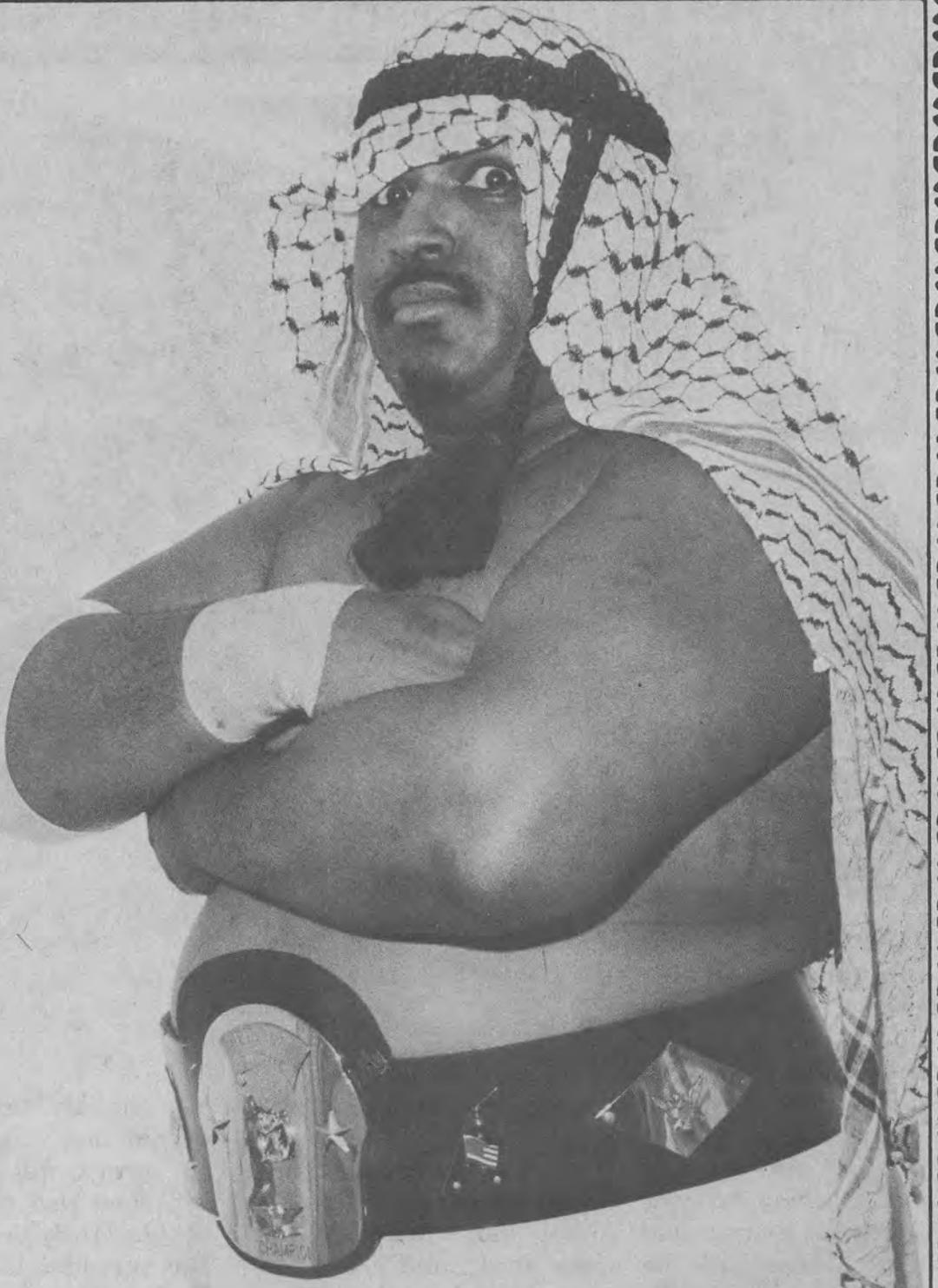
ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER



That is all I can do")... Has been arrested innumerable times for destroying arenas ("I like the desert. Buildings annoy me. I want to turn them into sand")... Rumored to be precluded from ever entering Rhode Island ("They do not appreciate me there")... Weighs well over 325 pounds... Lifts dead dogs, hairless preferably, to expand his already considerable chest ("Dead hair-

less animals have the proper weight and balance. I look for strays, kill them, eat a leg, then use them for my weight-lifting program")... Has very few close friends... Even rulebreakers are afraid of him ("No one understands me. A different culture and they think I am strange")... His greatest dream is to wrestle in Madison Square Garden ("For me, that would be everything").

CAPSULE PROFILE PIN-UP



ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Each day, out of the thousands of letters we receive, hundreds of them are from fans asking the whereabouts of their favorite wrestler. In this special column, we will try to answer the questions you ask the most!

RICK MARTELL

Rick Martell, who was named "Most Gorgeous Man" by women fans in Australia, has returned to the U.S. after signing a long-term agreement with Georgia promoters. It's good competition Rick is after, and he will no doubt find it in the likes of Abdullah the Butcher, Ole Anderson, and the Masked Assassin.

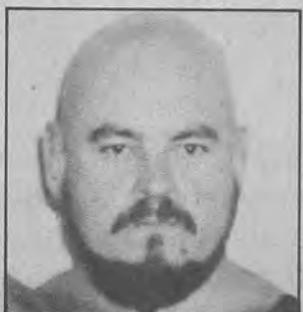


MIL MASCARAS

The man of a thousand faces, Mil Mascaras, has journeyed to the island nation of Japan for a series of bouts. Along with Mil is his brother, Dos Caras, who will join Mascaras in tag team competition. When will Mil return to these shores? "Well, I can't say just now, but I promise my fans plenty of action when I do return."

BOBO BRAZIL

Big Bobo, still one of the sport's most popular athletes, has decided to take a few matches a month in the AWA area. "They've got a bad man named Nick Bockwinkle there," Bobo told us. "I am to teach him a lesson in manners." If Brazil can also take his AWA title, we are sure no fans will complain. In fact, they'd probably celebrate for days!



IVAN KOLOFF

This former WWWF heavyweight champion has returned to that area with only one thought on his mind. "I will regain my title!" the Russian Bear swears. Steered once again by the notorious Lou Albano, Koloff has already showed his brutal nature by crippling two preliminary wrestlers. Will Backlund fall to this mighty assault? We'll soon see.

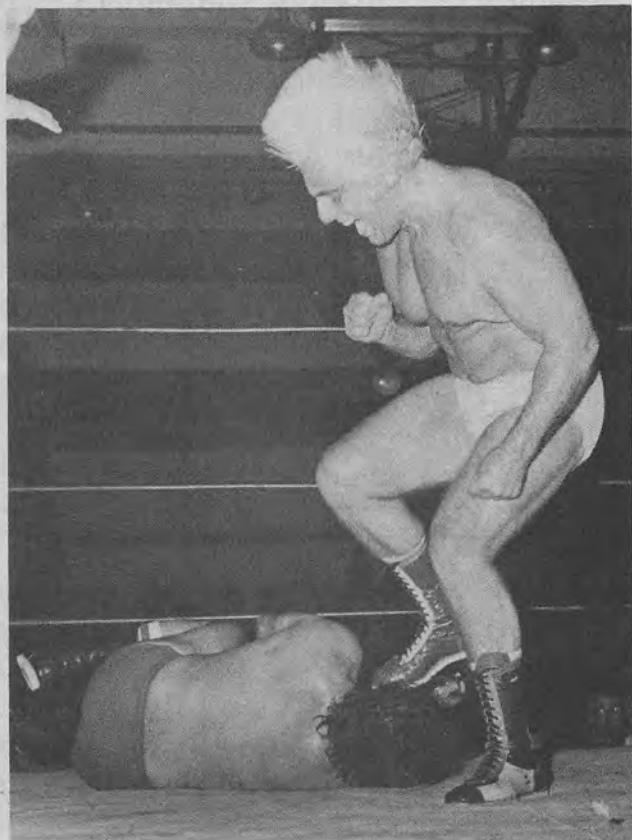


Matt Brock's PLAIN SPEAKING

NEW YORK: God help me, but there's something magnificent about Ivan Koloff when he's managed by Lou Albano. Most dirty wrestlers really cheat themselves, using illegal tactics when honest ones would work just as well. Koloff is different. He was born to be a dirty wrestler, as good as a dirty wrestler can be. There is a majesty in the man. One is awed by his splendor while despising him. There is some animal spirit in all of us that admires Koloff, the outlaw who bends the world to suit himself. Albano's evil genius is perfectly suited to bring Koloff to new heights—or depths, depending on how you look at it. In the best of all possible worlds, none of us would have the bloodlust that makes Koloff appeal to us. But Koloff is the underbelly of our humanity. What sacrifices would have to be made to burn his power from our souls?

SAN ANTONIO: Ric Flair in Texas. The machine-age brat battles the cowboys. Not surprisingly, Flair is doing very well. His time has come. There's a mechanical cruelty, a spoiled arrogance to the man; a perfect sensibility for our times. Flair doesn't rejoice in victories as much as he expects them; it's perfectly all right to take what one wants. There's still enough range in Texas to make a man recall what it's like to be thankful for small favors. Flair, in his air-conditioned

car and permanent press lifestyle, has never been grateful for anything. We have seen the future and it's Ric Flair. That's the best reason I have for drinking oneself to an early grave.



RIC FLAIR

MINNEAPOLIS: Verne Gagne doesn't have time. No matter where he is, there's always some place else he's got to be. We were supposed to have a leisurely

Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

lunch together, talking over old and new times, making the past better than it was. Verne said he looked forward to it, give him a chance to relax. He's forgotten how to relax. Our long lunch lasted 25 minutes, give or take a few seconds, which is more than Verne is usually willing to spend. The man is now a business, and business is alway on the move. It's too bad. Verne and I are two of the few left from the time we both broke in. I've stayed, while Verne only stuck around. He's in wrestling but so much more. At least he picked up the check. For old times sake, I hope he doesn't take it off his taxes as a business expense.

BOSTON: Even under the delirium of Red Sox fever, this town doesn't forget wrestling. The presence of Superstar Billy Graham has a lot to do with that. I thought he'd shrivel after losing the title. I won't underestimate the man again. There's new strength, an intelligence never before revealed. Defeat has turned him from a braggart into a man. It wouldn't be surprising for him to regain the championship. Those who look to Spiros Arion and Ken Patera to make things rough for champion Bob Backlund don't appreciate Graham enough. Perhaps Billy is learning something from his tag team partner, Luke Graham. People call Luke crazy. Hitler was crazy too.

ATLANTA: Stan Hansen is a fan

favorite. It's Judgement Day. Teaming with Dick Slater, Hansen is warring against rulebreakers. It can't last. Hansen feeds on cruelty; it's the source of his strength. To expect him to turn away from his past is to believe in miracles. Hansen is no miracle. He is savagery incarnate, and no change is possible. Nobody really changes. Certainly not Hansen. The fans should cheer him when he's battling rulebreakers; that's fair. They shouldn't believe he's a different person; that's stupid. Hansen reminds me of the story about a scorpion who asks a turtle to ferry him across the river. The turtle at first refuses, afraid the poisonous insect will sting and kill him. The scorpion points out that if he stings the turtle, he'll drown. It's to the scorpion's advantage not to sting. Faced with this logic, the turtle agrees. Halfway across the river, the insect stings the turtle. As they both drown, the turtle asks why was he stung. The scorpion replies, "It's my nature."

MILWAUKEE: Watching Crusher is like inhaling the sweet fragrance of barroom air. You know where you are and there'll be no changes made. It's every one for themselves; no quarter asked and none given. There are rules, rituals, and truths not to be denied. I like watching Crusher. He's an acquired taste, like Black Bull Scotch. □

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BODYSLAMS & PINFALLS

(Continued from Page 8)



Thank goodness Dino Bravo and Dominic DeNucci are thinking of splitting up their team now that they were destroyed by the Captain's marvelous Lumberjacks.

For the next few months The Lumberjacks have their work cut out for them. The fan favorites, wrestlers whose instinct for survival can never overcome the crowd's cheers, will foolishly challenge The Lumberjacks. In their clumsy ignorance, these fools will try to take tag team wrestling back to the DeNucci-Bravo dark ages. Fortunately, even the bribed referees won't be able to stop The Lumberjacks. These superior athletes tower over all the opposition.

The intelligent fan will support The Lumberjacks. Unhappily, there are few intelligent fans. Despite knowing how stupid most fans are, I couldn't believe they'd be dumb enough to cheer DeNucci and Bravo. But sure enough, these slanders on the Italian people were greeted with cheers. Wrestling deserves better than its fans.

Wrestling deserves, and has, the athletes it deserves. Men like The Lumberjacks will continue to be unappreciated heroes. They have a vision. Men of vision



Larry Zbyszko is now the victim of Pierre's expert nervehold. It was taught to him by the good Captain!

cannot be denied.

Eric, one of The Lumberjacks, explains, "For years, we've watched these so-called champions, punks like DeNucci and Bravo, get the glory and the money. We let them. It was important for us to perfect our teamwork than go for the easy money. Hell, it doesn't take any skill to wrestle like most tag teams. Any idiot can do it. DeNucci and Bravo proved that.

"But wrestling has to be more than selling your soul to the crowd. At least that's the way we feel. So, we just made enough money to get by while we perfected our skills. It was long, hard work. Nobody could understand why we didn't take the DeNucci-Bravo route—get quick money while being lousy. Well, we're too much men to do that!"

That's the difference between the real wrestlers and the so-called "scientific" oafs. There will always be people with too much pride and integrity to care what the stupid fans think. They know in their hearts what wrestling should be. That will be enough to keep them going through the insults, snubs, and bribed referees.

Eric and Pierre, The Lumberjacks, are men. That's why they're champions. □

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ON THE ROAD

(Continued from Page 10)

make their way west to the Coast and cross the ocean to Japan and Australia, I had to find one person to unravel this bizarre rumor.

She was waiting for me in front of a Burger King, Route 80. She told me she's the one with the pink and red top, the big brown eyes. I told her I'd whistle. Damn, sometimes I feel like a character in a detective story.

I shut off my motor and cringed as the post-ignition knock attracted attention. Maybe I'll get a raise and fix it. She immediately recognized me. Was it the New York plates, the Mets decal or the rumpled sports jacket?



Captain Lou Albano has ruined more than one career in his lifetime. Ending Bob's would delight him no end.

"I work for the WWF, part-time," she said. "I waited. "It is definite that a champion may have to resign. The pressure is on Backlund. He is being blackmailed." Sally lowered her eyes, wow, large brown pools. Keep objective, I warned myself. "Lou Albano has taken pictures of Backlund. Bad pictures, oh, nothing like you're thinking. But pictures which could ruin his career."

"Like?"

"Pictures of Backlund meeting with rulebreakers, pictures of Backlund taking money."

I whistled and she smiled, softly, lips pulled back, perfect white teeth, thin tongue.

"They on the level?"

"No," she shook her auburn hair. "They're phonies. But they look authentic enough. No one could doubt them. Unless . . ."

"The negatives?"

"Yes."

"And, of course, you know where they are."

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Bob has proven himself to be a true and superb champion. Let's hope his career won't be hurt by scheming managers.

"Gary Morgenstein?" she asked. This woman—I'll call her Sally—she didn't want her name used, husband, three large brothers, who needs this aggravation. "I'll get in the car and we'll take a drive."

I obliged and tore down 80, about 70 miles per hour, the pickup trucks made me nervous.

She produced a slip of paper, crumpled, tattered, four numbers on it. And a key. A locker key.

"Grand Central Station. The negatives are there. But you better hurry. Because if you don't get there before this



Bob ponders his future before a match. Can he survive the ugly rumors Albano and his kind are spreading about him?

comes out, Bob Backlund will resign. He'll have no choice."

She ordered me to leave her by the side of the road, in front of the unbreaking waves of cornfields, cows, one-story homes, the sky darkening toward the west. She said nothing as she left, only deposited the slip of paper with her phone number.

Nah, the husband, the brothers. Besides, I had to get back to New York. I couldn't risk talking to Lou Albano because he would surely destroy the negatives. I couldn't phone in to the office. I had to drive straight through, into Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, non-stop, maybe coffee, a hamburger, a 10-minute nap.

I know Bob Backlund. He's a damn fine man. A damn fine champion.

Lou Albano won't get away with this. Damn, what did I get myself into? □

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BEHIND THE DOOR

(Continued from Page 12)

Mulligan has thanked me. Gorilla Monsoon says he wishes I had been around in the 1960s to help set him straight sooner.

While on the subject of Mulligan and Hansen, I've got to admit I'm proud of them both. If you recall, in last month's column I told you about a meeting I had with Hansen. When I went out to see him, I had no idea what the meeting was to be about. As it turned out, he just wanted to talk to me, to talk about life in general. When I got home, it took me a full day to get it through my thick head what Hansen wanted. He wanted to let me know he intended to change his ways. I called him up at 3:00 the following morning to tell him I thought it was fantastic, to apologize for our past disagreements, and to let him know I'd help him in any way I can. We only talked for the next three hours!

As far as Blackjack Mulligan is concerned, he is as happy as I have ever seen him. Before one of his recent matches, I paid him a visit in his dressing room. There he was; whistling and singing, autographing a stack of pictures to hand out to the fans.

It really is great to see such talented men as Stan Hansen and Blackjack Mulligan taking to the ways of the scientific wrestler. It took me long enough to convert them, but in the long run, they, the fans, and professional wrestling will benefit from their decision.

Ken Patera must hold some kind of record for being disqualified. It seems every time I see him, he's being disqualified for something. What gets me is



I'm really glad to see that Stan Hansen is on my side now, helping scientific wrestlers clean up the sport.

the way Patera always asks so innocently, "Why?"

You know damn well why, Kenneth! For those of you who don't, I'll tell you. He's dirty and a notorious rulebreaker. I recently sat down and watched full-length movies of five of Patera's matches. Watching in slow motion, I was able to count a total of 236 obvious infractions of the rules by Patera.

And he wants to know why he's always being disqualified . . .

Normally, I'd never think of cutting off the hand that feeds me. INSIDE WRESTLING is my life, my being. However, after seeing that disgraceful, unartistic piece of trash by Dan Shocket in the September 1978 issue entitled, "Rick Steamboat is the Dirtiest Wrestler in History," I just have to say something. I just have to speak up.

I have a column I write every month. So does Bill Apter. So does Matt Brock. So does Peter King. So does Gary Morgenstein. So does Dan Shocket. In our columns, we write about subjects and happenings that have most impressed us over the past month. Aside from our columns, there are personal interviews, letters from fans, photo essays, stories written by wrestlers, and additional, supposedly objective stories about your favorite wrestlers. However, when I read that story about Rick Steamboat by Shocket, I was sick. It was nothing more than another "Bodyslams and Pinfalls" column. Since when does Dan Shocket rate two columns in one magazine. I'd write to Editor-in-Chief Peter King, and let him know just how you feel about Dan rating two columns that month, instead of his customary one. It's just not fair to ethical journalism!

Last week, I was invited to Bruno Sammartino's house. I spent the day there, swimming, working out, and dining with Bruno. When I left, I came away with the feeling that Sammartino longs for the thrill of battle. I know he misses his fans. Don't be surprised if he makes a comeback before too much longer.

Captain Lou Albano took a much needed vacation a few weeks back. Word has it that he had to get away from me—that I was steering him towards a breakdown. Let me tell you—Albano has already broken down!

Maybe next time he takes a vacation, it will be a permanent one! □

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SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from Page 18)

ashamed to show his face in public that he has to wear a mask. Dusty Rhodes shouldn't be wrestling because he's so fat and uncoordinated. Andre the Giant should quit wrestling and join the freak show in a circus. The best trio is Patera, Koloff and Graham. The only reason I will continue to buy this magazine is Dan Shocket's excellent column.

STEVEN STRAUSS
Flushing, N.Y.

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PICK, PICK, PICK ON KEN

Your magazines are just great. But nothing is perfect. So now I'm telling you what's not so perfect. The staff of Inside Wrestling is always picking on Ken Patera. Yes, I know there are people saying "who is that nut?" Well, I'm not a nut and all Ken Patera fans have good taste. Anyway, why does the staff always pick, pick, pick on Ken? The only normal person is Michael B. Kape. I would say Dan Shocket, but he gets too carried away. Randy Gordon is a pain in the neck. He makes Patera seem as bad as the devil. Please fellas, calm down.

ALFRED YOUNG
New York, N.Y.

SHOCKED AND OUTRAGED

I was absolutely sick when I read Dan Shocket's feature story in your otherwise excellent September issue ("Rick Steamboat is the Dirtiest

Steamboat (below) is a dirty wrestler as far as columnist Dan Shocket is concerned



Wrestler in History!"') Just who does Shocket think he is? How dare he say bad things about the Mid-Atlantic's favorite star, Rick Steamboat!

Listen, Shocket, I know you're probably jealous of Ricky's good looks and beautiful body. Rumor



Steamboat punishes Ric Flair in a brutal battle. Was Rick the one using dirty tactics throughout the match?

has it that you are probably only three feet tall and are deformed at that.

Just lay off Ricky Steamboat, Shocket. You bum, you!

GUIDO ROMANO
Raleigh, N.C.

ANOTHER PATERA FAN?

If it wasn't for the biased officiating due to the upper echelon management of the WWWF, Ken Patera would be wearing the WWWF belt he so justly deserves. During a recent WWWF card, Ken demonstrated his tremendous strength and stamina by actually blowing up and exploding a hot water bottle, bending nails with his bare hands, and smashing a pike

(Continued on page 54)

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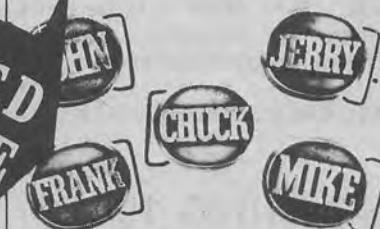
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SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from Page 53)

through a piece of maple that was about four inches thick. Of course, the idiotic fans continued to show their lack of class by jeering Mr. Patera and shouting "We want Putski." But, as usual, the "Polish Plotz" was nowhere to be found. So here's to Ken Patera, the strongest and most devastating wrestler ever to set foot in the squared circle.

STEVE SCHWARTZ
Philadelphia, Pa.

BRISCO THE CHAMP

Thank you for your wonderful Hotseat interview with two-time NWA champion Jack Brisco ("The Title is Mine . . . If I Want It!" / September 1978). Your Assistant Editor Gary Morgenstein should be congratulated



The "Hotseat" interview with Jack Brisco (September/1978) generated a lot of mail both pro and con about Jack.

for getting Brisco to open up and say such revealing things.

By the way, I totally agree with Jack. All he has to do is really want to regain the NWA belt and he will. He's the best wrestler in the world!

MARTHA CASTLE
Houston, Tex.

CLEAN WRESTLERS, DO IT THIS WAY

I was very overjoyed when I first read that Andre the Giant was planning an all-out war to rid wrestling of rulebreakers. But as I thought more on the subject, I think it is a bad idea. Though I despise the likes of Ric Flair, Stan Hansen and The Sheik, ridding the sport of this type of wrestler could kill attendance. Wrestling has prospered by putting a hated wrestler against a man the fans love. Sadly enough, many fans do crave a sense of villainy and bloodshed even though they won't admit it. If attendance drops, some scientific wrestlers will not make the fortune they make now and will remember when their opponents were rougher but their wallets were thicker.

I have come up with an alternate plan. Wrestling was at its high point when the three major federations had fan favorites as champions. But the rulebreakers concentrated on wearing down the champions, like Bruno Sammartino. Now all scientific wrestlers must combine their talents to wear down men like Bockwinkle and Race.

If Harley Race has to take on Dusty Rhodes, whose unorthodox style has made him great, then come back against Ivan Putski, who possesses enormous strength, in a short period of time, Race would be finished. After beating Race, then Bockwinkle, it's after the tag team title and various regional titles. After that, rulebreakers will still exist, but will have lost their power. The plan will take cooperation and problems may arise, but soon scientific wrestling will reign supreme.

DEAN FLEISCHMAN
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WAHOO McDANIEL

(Continued from Page 23)



NWA champion Harley Race lies on the floor after being thrown out by Wahoo in the heat of battle. The incident cost Wahoo the title he wanted so badly. He certainly deserves another chance.



The brawl is taken outside the ring as Wahoo and Race battle ferociously. This was one of Race's toughest defenses.

"I felt like I had everything under control," Wahoo said sorrowfully. "I had him on his butt. I was about to deliver the crushing blow. I completely dominated the whole match. I demonstrated that I was the vastly superior wrestler."

"And then that had to happen."

The strategy of McDaniel and Valentine was brilliant. They planned to consistently hammer away at Race and drain his remarkable stamina. At the same time, Wahoo would stay away from any of Race's many rulebreaking maneuvers.

It did work well. Very well. But then, the accident. The mistake.

"Yeah, it was a mistake. I know Wahoo slipped, but that's not the point," Valentine said grimly. "But he just, oh, I don't know, what's the point of talking about it. There's nothing to be done about it. The title and at least a million bucks. Out the window."

And over the top rope. □

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NICK BOCWINKLE

(Continued from Page 31)



"However, there is a clause in the AWA by-laws which enables us to strip a champion if there are a sufficient number of fan protests. Thus, if the fans respond in large enough numbers demanding we strip Bockwinkle of his belt, we can do it. But the response must be large and persuasive enough."

Perhaps this is the way it should be. Let the people who make wrestling, the ones who support the multitude of ungracious wrestlers like Nick Bockwinkle, decide. You people are the ones with the real power now. The question is, will you act upon it?

We have prepared a ballot for you to fill out. We ask that your names and addresses be clearly printed, quite legible. A court will toss out any name which is not neatly inscribed upon this ballot.

Once we have received the ballots, we will pass it on to the AWA. One of our editors has already been in touch with the Institute for Fairness in Wrestling, and Michael B. Kape, president of the association, is excited about the concept.

Above: Heenan leads the way as Bockwinkle leaves the dressing room ready for another violent title defense. Below: He is ruthless against former friend Ray Stevens.



"I firmly believe that such a groundswell of fan unrest will act as a compelling force to remove one of wrestling's most hideous characters from its ranks," Kape said. "My entire organization is prepared to support this move."

Now all circuits are flowing. And the electricity has animated the distasteful vocal cords of Heenan, who is not surprisingly unhappy about the idea.

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"Where you gonna find more than three wrestling fans who can read and write?" he snorted in contemptuous derision. "You ain't gonna get more than three people writing in. Besides, why are people under the misconception that Bockwinkle deserves to have his title stripped?"

Broken legs, foreign substances, cowardly acts, bloodied rings, bruised fans, deceitful words, the list of Bockwinkle's disgraceful reign as AWA champion reads like the court transcripts of death row. Unquestionably, there is overwhelming factual evidence to support his removal.

But, again, it is up to the fans.

"Everyone loves me," Bockwinkle said, a trace of genuine hurt creasing his handsome features. "No one wants to toss me out. I'm a great champion and I've never done anything wrong to anyone."

"Damn, this is ridiculous. Fans won't write in. Even if they did, most of them are too scared. Like the idiots I wrestle, they're afraid."

Even though such a move has legal basis in the AWA character, Heenan pledges to fight this petition recall in court.

"Let's just say, for argument's sake, hypothetical, of course, that there are more than three fans who can read and write," Heenan said. "They can't get away with this."

"We'd challenge every single petition and make the judges go to every idiot's house and confront them with this. You'll see, Nick is right, they'll start shaking and retract this. Those dumb morons, why do they keep hassling us?"

Will you hassle them? Will the fans finally put an end to the Bockwinkle title reign?

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Pic. Bk/Spr 76



Pic. Bk/Sum 76



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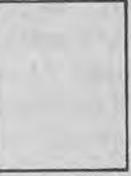
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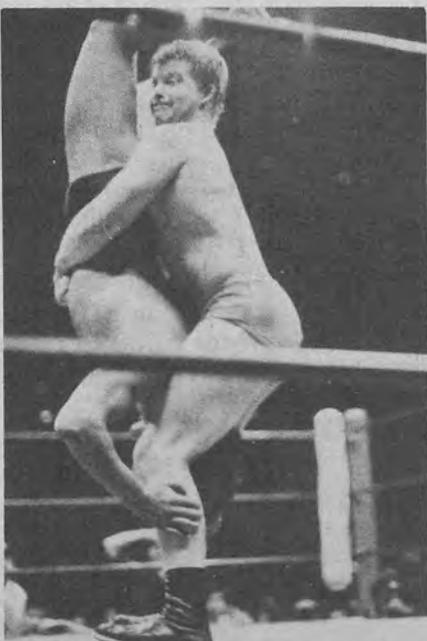


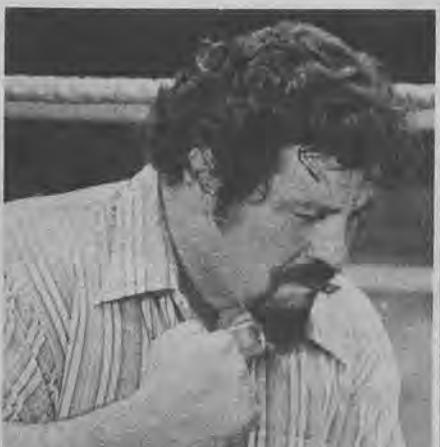
Andre the Giant & Bob Backlund

(Continued from Page 35)



Andre puts his nervehold to use against Inoki (above). Andre's advice helped Bob in his match against Inoki. He piledrives Inoki (below left) and gets out of an abdominal stretch applied by Antonio (below right).





Captain Lou Albano (above) is fearful of the Backlund/Andre deal. Bob's manager, Arnold Skoaland (below) is delighted that Andre is advising Bob in overseas bouts.



do anything!"

One final rumor rounds out this story. It has been whispered that men like Rhodes and Mascaras left the WWWF for both financial and artistic reasons. They feel that Backlund will never give them a shot. Perhaps they expect a fair number of title matches against Race and Bockwinkle.

But what happens if Race and Bockwinkle continue their elusive tactics and fail to give Mil and Dusty their shots? What if Backlund's superb physical machine wears down and he is dethroned by a man like George Steele?

Can wrestling possibly hope to thrive on the oily souls of Race, Bockwinkle and one of their ugly comrades?

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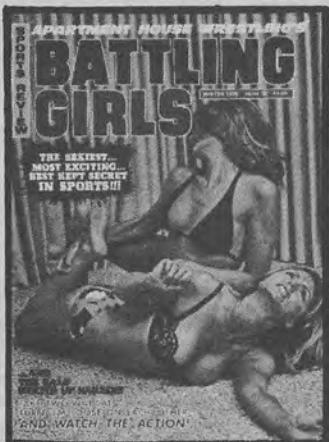
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DUSTY RHODES

(Continued from Page 40)



Waldo Von Erich moves out of range of Dusty's bionic elbow (above). It's Boris Malenko (right) who gets the Rhodes treatment. "Dusty Rhodes should be banned for using steel in that thing!" Malenko snarls.

asinine absurdity and what is reasonable doubt. Blackjack Mulligan.

"I've wrestled Dusty for a good many years now. I know that boy real good, and I can say quite absolutely that people like Ric Flair are just pumping so many lies into the stratosphere."

"I know for a fact that they have no proof and are just jealous of Dusty's fame and fans. So they gotta beat him somehow since they can't dump him in the ring. I know that Flair, that disgusting

cockroach, will do anything to get at Dusty."

"Rhodes' elbow is clean, pure, like the snow on the Montana plains. I'd stake my reputation on that."

All that remains is exactly what to call this continuing and perhaps eternal doubt. Dusty and Mulligan swear that his elbow is clean. The rulebreakers insist otherwise.

Dusty Rhodes seems trapped by his past with all his future glories only serving to enhance the



mystery. The more he wins, the more questions arise. If he loses, perhaps he will end the doubts, but his career will die, as well.

"Look, look," Dusty brandished his naked elbow. "Nothing, man, nothing at all." □

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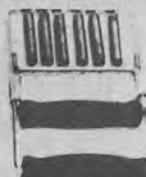
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